Fantasy/Speculative Fiction -- English 215 Fall 2010 -- Howard

Office: Sexton 6026E   Office Hours: 10:00-10:45 Daily   Email: nhoward@wvc.edu
Course Web pages http://commons.wvc.edu/nhoward/215/default.aspx

Class Meetings: 11:00 AM daily

Course description:
Study of fantasy, magical realism and speculative fiction as literary forms with emphasis on theme. Analysis of theme, symbolism, structure and character found in fantasy, magical realism and speculative fiction.

Handout Packets

Student responsibilities:

Daily readings, discussions and presentations
Daily attendance
Two critical analysis essays
Two essay exams (Mid-term and Final)

Grading:

15%   Essay One
20%   Essay Two
15%   Mid-Term
20%   Final Exam
30%   Daily Discussions and Group Presentations
100%   

Students have four (4) “free” absences—no matter the reason. Additional absences will reduce their grade by one full grade each.

Student Learning Outcomes:
Upon completion of this course, successful students will (be able to):
1. Discuss in large and small groups works of Fantasy/Speculative/Magical Realism using sufficient and relevant literary terms.
2. Recognize and interpret recurrent patterns, elements, motifs, conventions, styles, themes, and forms.
3. Employ literary elements (the vocabulary of literature analysis) to generalize from one work to another.
4. Use process writing to draft and revise critical analyses of a novel from a selected list.
5. Demonstrate an appreciation for and understanding of Fantasy/Speculative/Magical Realism as an art form.
6. Express and support opinions about works of fiction.

WVC Core Abilities Outcomes (General Education):
Upon completion of this course, successful students will:
• Think critically (analyze, synthesize, evaluate and apply, problem solve, reason qualitatively and quantitatively) through close reading of text.
• Communicate skillfully in diverse ways and in diverse situations through class discussions, essays and exams.
• Act responsibly as an individual and as a member of a team or group through small groups, study groups, and entire-class discussion.
• Seek knowledge, information, and diverse viewpoints through immersion in analysis and interpretation of literature.
• Clarify and apply a personal set of values/ethics in response to the works of major authors.

Core topics of this course.
• Definition of and readings in genres: magical realism--cultural/political base; fantasy—oral tradition, myth and legend, scope of archetypes in literature of man; science fiction—speculative fiction, archetypes.
• Review of literary analysis paper criteria, format and expectations
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Calendar:

Sept. 20  Readings from handouts, *Science Fiction: Stories and Contexts* and course syllabus; discussion of genre: science fiction/speculative fiction, archetypes.

"Introduction" p. 1-10, from *Science Fiction: Stories and Contexts*

**Movie:** *Soylent Green*

Sept. 27  Disasters and Apocalypses p. 892-1027

**Group Presentation and Discussion of Critical Contexts,** p. 984-1027

"Omega: The Last Days of the World"

"Adam and No Eve"

"The Terminal Beach"

"How the World Was Saved"

Tentative Thesis for Paper One Due

Review of Literary Analysis paper criteria, format and expectations

Oct. 4  "Cassandra"

"Take Your Choice"

"Recording Angel"

"When This World Is All on Fire"

**Peer Review for Paper One (Short Story Essay)—Online using Turnitin.com with your Critical Essay Group**

Oct. 11  **Artificial Life**

**Group Presentation and Discussion of Critical Contexts,** p.427-477

**Movie:** *The Blade Runner*

No class Friday October 15—*Departmental Work Day*

Oct. 18  **Paper One Due before class begins on Monday, October 18**

"Sandman"

"Liar!"

"Second Variety"

"The Girl Who Was Plugged In"

"The Algorithms for Love"

Oct. 25  **Time**

**Group Presentation and Discussion of Critical Contexts,** p.1203-1240

"All You Zombies"

"When We Went to See the End of the World"

**Midterm Review**

Midterm Exam on October 25, 2010--essay--Students choose three of five possible questions

Nov. 1  "Vintage Season"

"Start the Clock"

"At the Rialto"

"Story of your Life"

**Paper Two Tentative Thesis due November 5, 2010**

Nov. 8  **Utopias and Dystopias**

**Group Presentation and Discussion of Critical Contexts,** p. 850-891

"We"

"The Weapon Shop"

**No Class Friday November 12, 2010—Peer Review Weekend Online using Turnitin.com**

Nov. 15  **Utopias and Dystopias**

"The Country of the Kind"

"'Repent, Harlequin!’ Said the Ticktockman"

**Movie:** *Minority Report*

**Paper two over your novel (5-6 pages) Due Friday, Nov. 19, before class.**

Nov. 22  "When It Changed"

"The Persistence of Vision"

"Kirinyaga"

"Dead Space for the Unexpected"

"Something to Hitch Meat To"

**Review for Final Exam**

Dec. 7  Final Exam--students will choose six of ten essay questions

Final Exam is Tuesday, December 7, 2010 from 10:30-12:30 in our classroom
Assessment criteria/techniques:
See Class Participation and Paper rubrics on the course web site.

I. a. Instructor will evaluate student's contributions to class discussion according to the significance of individual and critical context group approach, insight and completeness of evidence.
b. Instructor will evaluate students written analysis skills in essay exams according to personal approach, literary theme and device, significance of insights and completeness of evidence.

II. a. Instructor will evaluate student's written work according to individual approach, theme, and significance of supporting evidence.
b. The instructor will evaluate the student's written and verbal criticism of the literature according to the depth, honesty, and significance of that input.
c. The instructor will evaluate the student's written and verbal literary analysis skills according to grammatical, syntactical and organizational skills displayed.

III. a. Instructor will evaluate the student's written and verbal synthesis skills according to vocabulary used, significance of insight and breadth of material incorporated.
b. Instructor will evaluate the student's reading analysis skills according to vocabulary used, significance of insight and breadth of material incorporated.

IV. a. Instructor will determine student's cumulative knowledge through comprehensive written and oral expression evaluated through completeness and depth of evidence presented.
b. Instructor will determine student's cumulative knowledge through comprehensive written and oral expression evaluated according to variety of theme and significance of insight.
c. Instructor will determine student's cumulative knowledge through comprehensive written and oral expression evaluated according to the depth, honesty, and significance of that input.

Criteria Sheet for Papers/Peer Review
See official Paper One and Paper Two Rubrics on the course web site.

Organization and Development

Papers must have one single clear focus, based on a theme in the Myth of Quest or one of the critical contexts essays, stated as a thesis.

The Thesis Statement, the student's opinion asserted as a truth, must occur in the lead (introduction) to the essay.

The Body of the essay must include at least three (preferably four or five) reasons why the thesis is true. You have found these "reasons why the thesis is true" by tracing your particular idea/issue through the stories/novel. These "reasons why" create body paragraphs. The body paragraphs must use references from the stories and class notes and discussion to prove each reason true. These references can be either direct quotations from the text of the story and/or class handouts, or the references may be paraphrases from the text, handouts, lectures and discussion. Liberal use of the literary vocabulary of the course is required. (This is a Literature course. Please use MLA shot paper documentation style.)

The Conclusion of the essay must pull all the reasoning together to show the proof for the thesis.

Mechanical Correctness
Standard American English sentence structure, spelling, grammar and punctuation are required. If you are unsure, buy a handbook of English (many are available), or check one out from the library. The WVC English department recommends: EasyWriter, 4th edition, by Andrea A. Lunsford (required for all WVC composition courses), or Dianna Hacker's Web Site: http://www.dianahacker.com/resdoc/humanities.html

Plagiarism
All critical essays must be peer reviewed and originality checked through Turniti.com and within electronic deadlines. Plagiarized work will receive and “F.” Any submission not meeting these basic requirements will receive no grade. No exceptions. No extra credit. Plan your life with time to spare for emergencies before they happen.

No late work accepted. No late tests.